Packaged food for Mid-Day Meal Scheme

3603.SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food Commissioner appointed by the Supreme Court has, in a report, pointed out leakage in the Mid-Day-MEAL Schme for school children, preferring hot meals cooked at site;

(b) whether Government is toying with the proposal to provide pre-packaged, ready to eat foods, for children with similar nutritional value of hot cooked meals; and

(c) if so, whether the offer of Biscuit Manufacturers' Association of India for highly nutritive and specialized food for the ICDS scheme is under consideration of Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATAMI): (a) The Court Commissioners appointed by the Supreme Court for monitoring the implementation of the Mid Day Meal Scheme have highlighted some issues of concern in relation to the Mid Day Meal Scheme in their 7th Report submitted to the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

(b) The proposal to provide pre-packaged, ready to eat foods under Mid Day Meal Programme was considered carefully. The Department of School Education and Literacy does not support the proposal because replacement of the hot cooked Mid Day Meal with pre-packaged, ready to eat foods would not be in the nutritional interest of children.

(c) Ministry of Women & Child Development, Food & Nutrition Board has reported that they have not received any proposal from Biscuit Manufacturers' Association of India for supply of highly nutritive and specialized foods for the ICDS Scheme.

Coverage under Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Jharkhand

3604. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what percentage of children in Jharkhand is covered by the Mid-Day Meal Scheme;

(b) what is the kind of food, which is provided under scheme in different States;

(c) what is the rate of deficiency of Vitamin A and iron among children, according to the National Nutrition Monitoring Board (NNMB); and

(d) why there is no plan to fortify the Mid-Day Meals in schools despite compelling evidence on deficient intake of micronutrients, as revealed by NNMB's recent survey?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATAMI): (a) As per population projections for 2007, the number of children in the 6-10 age group in Jharkhand is 35,53,600. The State Government has reported that 35,29,381 children in classes I—V in Government and Government aided schools and AIE/EGS centres are availing Mid Day Meal. This represents 99% coverage of children at the primary stage of learning under the Mid Day Meal Programme.

(b) The guidelines of the Mid-day Meal Scheme stipulate that Mid-Day Meal should be of minimum 450 calories with 12 grams of protein at primary level. The nutritional value at